THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

TRAVELS.

LETTERS FROM GENEVA AND FRANCE.

Written during a residence of between two and three years in different parts of those countries, and addressed to a lady in Virginia.

——quâ me quoque possim
Tollere humo. VIR.

Je dirai j'étais là, telle chose m'advint,
Vous y croyriez être vous-mêmes.

LA FONTAINE.

(*Continued from page* 130.)

LETTER V.

Geneva.

My dear E——,

A GREAT part of my satisfaction arose, as you may well imagine, from witnessing the impression, which so many new objects made upon the minds of those with me. They were strongly impressed with religious awe on entering, during the celebration of mass, the ancient church, which had formerly been the cathedral: the long-drawn aisles and fretted vaults, the solemn dignified appearance, on all sides, the notes of the organ, the cloud of incense, and numbers on their knees in prostrate devotion, made it seem as if we had at length found a temple worthy of the Great Father of the Universe; but the glow of religion was soon allayed by the sight of various saints in their various chapels, and the appearance of the Virgin about the size of the large doll, which some lady once made you a present of, and drest in a blue silk petticoat.

From place to place, in all the churches, are confessionals, which have the appearance of a sentry-box, with a partition in the middle, and a small grate through which the penitent on his knees pours forth the secrets of his mind, whilst a priest on the other side listens attentively, and may be supposed to impose penance or to absolve, to rebuke or to encourage, as the occasion may require. Every human institution is liable to be abused, and it would be wrong to argue from the abuse, against the institution itself; but surely, if those among us, who in the earlier part of life deviate from the paths of strict

propriety, knew of some good man, some man of God, before whom we might pour forth the sorrows of a contrite heart, whose advice might direct, and whose exhortations might console us, an additional impediment might be thrown in the way of immorality, and the path of virtue be not forever closed to those who may once have wandered away from it.

From the church to the play, the transition will appear a very natural one, and you may judge of my feelings, when seated in one of the largest theatres of Europe, and amidst an audience of three thousand people, and in company with so large a part of my family. A celebrated singer from Paris was lately arrived, and all seemed anxious to hear, and prepared to applaud what they knew had been applauded in the capital. It was the opera of Zemire and Azor, and it was well for me that I was deeply read in the history of beauty and the beast, upon which it is founded; for the theatre was so large, and the noise, (except during the performance of some favourite air) so great, that I could scarcely distinguish a word of what was said on the stage.

If the musick and Mademoiselle Rolando's singing were delightful, the dancing was no less suited to attract our admiration, which would have been complete, had it not been for the almost complete nakedness of the performers: tight flesh-coloured silk drawers, with a slight gauze petticoat, can hardly be called clothes. I am surprised how, even in these latter times, appearances so revolting to any idea of decency can be permitted. There was a circumstance of visual delusion during the ballet of the same nature as that which occurred during our sail upon the river. Azor, or the beast, whom the opera makes a great magician, being desirous of amusing Zemire, waves his wand, and a chariot appears in the clouds bearing two persons, whom I took for little images, admiring the ingenious contrivance by which they were made to turn their heads, as if they were speaking; for not supposing them to be two dancers, my experience did not correct the errour of my sight, and I was all astonishment when on the approach of the vehicle to the stage I saw them get out and dance, and found that, as children express it, they were *true and true* persons.

We remained at Bourdeaux too short a time to know much more of the inhabitants than may be acquired at publick places: the American consul and his lady, Mr. and Mrs. Lee, were extremely kind and hospitable to us: but in their house, we were as in America, and saw the interiour of only one family besides, which was that of the venerable Pierre Texier, whom I had corresponded with formerly; he had struggled through the Revolution, so fatal to almost every merchant of Bourdeaux, and now lived in the bosom of a fine family, and in the exercise of great hospitality. By what I could learn, literature is not as fashionable in Bourdeaux as it was formerly, the demands of the Revolution having taken away the youth for a time, from attending to any call but that of arms, and the Genius of Commerce having revived during the short interval of peace with a degree of enthusiasm which entirely absorbed the publick mind.

Besides the opera-house, there is another and a smaller theatre, where comedies are performed, and where I was very much diverted to see the representation of two or three English characters; they were well dressed, well-looking personages, with plenty of money, and very liberal; but were made to speak such bad French, as rendered me afraid of my own accent and manner of speaking, for some days after.

(To be continued.)

MISCELLANY.

For The Port Folio.

MR. OLDSCHOOL.

I lately observed, that an anecdote, which made its first appearance in the Wheeling Repository, after "running its merry round through most of the newspapers," had at length excited the critical notice of some city wit, and been lifted to an honourable station in The Port Folio. When I say *honourable*, I speak seriously; for although it is manifest, that the critick intended to *gibbet* the thing as a *malefactor*, yet the ceremonies of execution have been so conducted, as to give eclat to this anecdote, which might otherwise soon have been forgotten. When I read this little story, of the Indian and his venison in The Port Folio, and found it accompanied with three whole pages of critical observations, I was puzzled to suggest any reason why this majestick Zoilus should have fallen with so much fury upon a harmless matter-of-fact production. Surely thought I, the eagle penetration of a Philadelphia critick, must have discovered something uncommonly absurd, or atrocious, in this Indian story, or he would not have descended from the lofty scaffold of his classical dignity, to prey upon what he himself considered the garbage of a "Vermont Journal." But notwithstanding these suggestions, as I knew the innocent intention of the writer of the anecdote, and as I could not discover that the article contained anything criminal or absurd, I felt no disposition to abandon my own opinion of the anecdote, though it was denounced by the thunder of home-born anathema, supported by the auxiliar poignancy of French wit.

Upon a more minute investigation of the criticism, I thought I discovered, that it was not so much the intention of the critick, to *pulverise* this anecdote and scatter it to the four winds, as it was to discharge a whole broadside of literary vehemence against a certain *red people*, whom he seems unwilling to acknowledge as his brethren. This discovery, I confess, mortified my vanity: for I had contemplated entering the list of controversy with the critick, in defence of this anecdote, and by that means enjoying for once, an opportunity to hold "sweet discourse and converse with a nobleman." But it appeared to me ungentlemanlike to engage with the critick in a contest, in which his strength would not be mainly directed against myself. Had the critick's choler been directed against the anecdote, which apparently first awakened his critical animosity, then, I could have traced his fulminations without subjecting myself to any sneering imputations. However in this state of the case, I took up the *cudgels* in defence of the anecdote, it might properly be remarked, that this conduct evinced but little courage; for the critick was not seriously contending with the plagiarist, but with *Cornplanter*, *Red Jacket*, *Little Billy*, and all their clans of "natural brute beasts," in the western wilderness.

I think, Mr. Oldschool, that in a contest with this critick, I should stand upon "*'vantage ground.*" If my supposition, that the critick's wrath is levelled not against the anecdote, but against the Indian plagiarist himself be correct, it will then be obvious to all scholars, that I could not be required to prove this negative position, to wit, that the poor Indian who lost his venison in the wilds of America, had never read Voltaire's Tale of Zadig. On the contrary I think it is evident that I might rest upon the presumption in my favour, and call upon the critick to demonstrate, by legal evidence, the affirmative position, that this "natural brute beast" of an Indian, though not an accomplished "Oxford scholar" was at least conversant with the one thousand and one volumes of Voltaire, and also, that, *beast* as he was, he had at *least accuracy* enough, not to blunder in appropriating to himself the shrewd discoveries of Zadig. And I might also insist that until the knowledge and scholarship of the Indian was demonstrated, the charge of plagiarism

could not be supported. Were I even to concede that this Indian was a *plagiarist*, I might then compare the *accuracy* of such an Indian, with the *accuracy* of that critick, who, after proving the Indian to be a *scholar*, acquainted with the writings of Voltaire, and able to commit plagiarisms upon them, roundly asserts, that "between him, and the bear that growls through the forest, there is a perfect resemblance."

Moreover, in case the critick should insist, contrary to the bearing of his own expressions, that he did not mean to fix the crime of plagiarism upon the poor Indian, but upon the fabricator of the story, I should be tempted to animadvert, not only upon his mild manner of expressing his utmost contempt for that depraved taste, which can relish a *composition* of this sort:" but I should also inquire what he means by the word "*composition*" itself. If he should answer that he alluded to those *ideal ingredients*, which *compose* the subject-matter of the anecdote, I should then contrast them with the many *ingredients* or entertaining particulars which are jumbled together, in the "interesting" though *pernicious** story of Zadig, if on the other hand, the critick should avow, that it was the *literary* part of the "composition," which so rankly offended his *undepraved* taste, I should attempt to cover the writer under the ingenuous confession, that I had never before known that *polite readers* and classick scholars, could tolerate nothing but the "poignant and polished sentences of the French wit." Indeed I should hint my opinion that if all English and American "*compositions*" must necessarily be measured by this standard only, the great mass of what has been written and printed since the days of "*good queen Bess*," would fall under condemnation, nay I might possibly hazard the assertion, that if every literary "*composition*, which, in point of style and poignancy sinks below the *par* of Voltaire, were to be swept into the dark hell of oblivion, even the glossy excellencies of The Port Folio itself would soon be scattered among the rubbish. I should assert this without any disposition to disparage those weekly pages, from which I derive much both of amusement and instruction: but under the apprehensions that among the dust of so much sweeping, Shakespeare himself would scarcely be left upon the shelf undisturbed. And here I might perhaps observe that, if the critick would reflect upon these matters, he might possibly feel how absurd it is to make these out-of-the-way comparisons, which peradventure are as dangerous to himself as they are odious to others.

Furthermore, when the critick denounces this anecdote, to be "rude as the rocks of Scandinavia," I am somewhat at a loss to determine whether he has reference to the subject-matter or to the style of the "composition:" but in either case, not having ever seen these aforesaid rocks, I should not have the temerity to assert, that this little newspaper paragraph, resembles anything in the world, so much as these said "rocks of Scandinavia." Nevertheless I might possibly hint, that if the writer had not considered himself so tied down, by what had been stated to him, as matter of fact, as not to be at liberty, in relating the anecdote, to display the "glory of invention," and the "brightness of genius," the "composition," might possibly have been "embellished by taste and consummated by art," so as to "compare" in some degree with the French man's "delightful Romance," possibly I might go further and suggest, that to judge the narration of a "rude" matter of fact, by the same rules, by which we would test a "composition" of genius and imagination is a mode of criticism, not heretofore considered orthodox, except among the "Oxford scholars" of Philadelphia.

* I say *pernicious*, for this same "interesting story" of Zadig, is one of those "delightful Romances of Voltaire," which was written to diffuse the doctrines of Atheism. I was somewhat surprised to find it so highly commended in The Port Folio.

I have thus, Mr. Oldschool, hinted some of the points, upon which I should rely were I rash enough to enter the list of controversy, in defence of this anecdote, with the redoubtable critick, who has taken aim over our heads, at the poor Indians in the woods beyond us. I will now, with your permission, suggest some objections which exist in my mind, to the principles of the critick himself, and which, I think might be urged in defence of those despised "*red people of the west.*"

In the first place, the critick's vehement and bitter expressions of "scorn for Indian pretentions and Indian principles" somehow by an odd association of ideas, reminds me of that "wolfish insensibility" he so earnestly deprecates. Indeed the violent animosity which the critick manifests against this whole race of human beings, who, because they have not had their minds moulded according to the maxims of Oxford, are represented as "bears of the forest, torpid for half the season, and presenting like them every image of dullness, ruggedness and ferocity," induces me to suspect, that "wolfish insensibility," is not solely confined to the wilderness.

In the next place, did I deem it necessary to vindicate the character of the Indians from these illiberal charges, I should insinuate that they ought to be considered as the *exparte evidence* of a *whiteman*, exhibited before the tribunal of a *whiteman's* taste. And further I should perhaps hint an opinion, that "the *luxury of literature, and the highest polish of civilized life*," now known and so much extolled in Philadelphia, really appear, in countries both to the eastward and westward, as partaking very little of the principles of true simplicity and correct taste, on this subject I should be very brief, because it would lead into a discussion of certain habits, manners and prejudices, which probably could not be canvassed with good humour and liberality. I might also insist, that the harsh and ill-natured epithets, which the critick has applied, to whole nations of men, are widely different, from that "sweet discourse" which generally characterises the conversation of the *christian*, the *scholar* and the *nobleman*. And I might further hazard the sentiment that the intolerant spirit, which can deliberately prepare and circulate such illiberal abuse through the *polished* circles of a *civilized people*, and the *refined taste* of that people, who can receive and applaud such abuse, furnishes strong evidence, that the *real characteristicks* of the savage, are to be found among other people, besides our "red brethren of the west."

I do not, Mr. Oldschool, positively insist upon the correctness of the hints I have above suggested. They are submitted as present impressions and if you do not deem them, garbage unworthy the pages of The Port Folio, I would thank you to have them inserted. Should they excite the wrath of any Philadelphia wit, I beg of him to treat the writer who is "a woodman of the west," with at least as much moderation, as the critick in question has displayed toward his Indian brethren.

H.

Banks of the Ohio, Feb. 7, 1808.

For The Port Folio.

CLASSICAL LEARNING.

(*Continued from page* 135.)

Hesiod was born at Ascra in Bœotia, a country said to be not very favourable to genius, though it once produced a Pindar. Some affirm that he was contemporary with Homer, and produce an epigram attributed to him, in which he relates, if we may take his word, that he had vanquished Homer in a poetical combat on Helicon, and he might have done so in the opinion of bad judges, if he had been cotemporary with him. Some make him more than a century later, and others think him older than Homer, on account of the rudeness of his language. But the genius and capacity of the two poets will admit of no comparison. He wrote on Husbandry, under the title of Works and Days: his work has few beauties, some puerilities and much superstition. He wrote likewise what he calls the Shield

of Hercules, containing an account of the birth and first adventures of that hero, which contains some just pictures of ancient manners. His Theogony, or Genealogy of the gods, is quite simple, and contains, perhaps, an inaccurate account of ancient traditions, without animation or ornament. He has some few excellent moral sentences. Some of his descriptions, likewise, have no small merit, and have been often quoted.

Theocritus was a Sicilian, and wrote in the Dorick dialect, which prevailed among the Greek colonies in that island. He was the father of pastoral poetry, and his shepherds converse in a ruder style than those of Virgil. Being situated in a more luxurious Arcadia than than of Peloponnesus, some of his Idyllia, one in particular, is very licentious. In the most of them, the language of the human passions is expressed with truth, simplicity, and beauty. Theocritus did not seem to dream of his fame in after ages, though he seems to think it an honour for Ptolomy, King of Egypt, to be celebrated in his songs. Virgil imitated him with success, but is thought not to have reached his simplicity. Virgil lived in a much more polished age. He deals but little in description, but the characters he represents are natural and just. Perhaps the Dorick dialect was the most proper to express the language of rude and artless men, and has given a more natural air to his performances.

Demosthenes was the most celebrated oratour of Athens, at a time when Grecian eloquence was at the highest. He was cotemporary with Philip of Macedon, and the great adversary of that Prince, in his designs on the liberties of Greece, and though he at last fell a sacrifice to the resentment of Philip, being given up to him and put to death by his command, yet the scandalous chronicle of those times reports some instances in which he was not superiour to the force of bribery. It is somewhat strange that the greatest of the Greek and Roman oratours were both timid in their conduct, though they died with courage, and both suffered violent deaths on account of their orations, which, from the similarity of the argument and fatal issue, have been both denominated Philippicks. Eloquence seems to be a dangerous talent to the possessour, however useful to the publick. There seems to be some sense in what Juvenal says, that he would rather have been the authour of ridiculous poems than of orations that would have deprived him of his life, while they eternized his fame. Demosthenes was originally a stammerer, and seemed disqualified by nature for a graceful elocution. But his great diligence and zeal for fame overcame the unhappy configuration of his natural organs. He accustomed himself to declaim alone, with his mouth almost full of pebbles, that the effort he made in that state might enable him to articulate his words more distinctly when they were taken out. And certainly a man who can be understood with pebbles in his mouth, will be easier understood when he has none. This should teach young men not to be too much discouraged by slight natural defects, but to endeavour to surmount or lessen them by diligence. Demosthenes used to declaim to the waves when in a storm, to accustom himself to the noise of a popular assembly, to exercise his patience, and to enable him to raise his voice occasionally. Having contracted an awkward rolling from one side to another, in the course of his first trials, he used to declaim in his chamber before a looking-glass, in order to correct it, and adjust the decency of his action, on which it would seem that he laid more stress than is commonly thought, if it be true than when he was asked successively what was the first, second, and third part of oratory, he uniformly replied, "action." It is certain that when Æschines was banished to Rhodes, and had read to the Rhodians the oration of Demosthenes, by which he had suffered, when they gave it great praises, he assured them that they would have had a much higher opinion of it, if they had heard it pronounced by himself, which must lead us to think that the gesture and action of Demosthenes gave great weight to his arguments. His orations were always carefully prepared and premeditated, and he would never speak without preparation, so that his adversaries used to say, sarcastically, that his orations smelled of the lamp. He used to declaim between the naked points of two swords, that he might not reel from side to side, or transgress those bounds which he had prescribed for his action. He studied under Isæus, who was famous for his vehemency, but he abated something of the fury of his master. The style of Demosthenes is strong, nervous, and pathetick, and his thoughts seem all to arise naturally out of the occasion, though they were prepared with the nicest care. Instead of multiplying words, he abounds in sentiments, and it was observed that nothing could be taken from his orations without injuring the sense. He was well acquainted with the subjects on which he spoke, and with the people whom he addressed. He steadily pursued the interest of his country, and never spoke from private or by-ends. All that Philip would have wished for was his silence. He never exhausted his subject nor wearied his hearers. His success would have been less, had he studied to blind his countrymen, as his antagonists

often did. Philip was more afraid of his orations than of the fleets and armies of Athens. It is not easy to speak of Demosthenes, without thinking of Cicero, who has been so often and so justly compared to him. It is to be observed that both the Greek and Roman oratour steadily pursued the interests of their country, and never appeared against it, yet their countrymen showed little resentment at either of their deaths, and though they both disgraced their manhood by inconsistencies, they both died faithful citizens. Demosthenes always put his ornaments in the proper place, and despised the play and pomp of needless words. He exerted himself powerfully in his own cause, but never lost sight of the interests of the publick. Though conscious of his superiority in oratorial talents, he does not seem to have made comparisons between himself and them in that respect, but desired his countrymen to compare the several measures without regard to the men.

Cicero was born at Arpinum, of ordinary parents, but raised himself by his own abilities to the highest honours of the commonwealth of Rome. He possessed a more comprehensive mind, and had more extensive learning than Demosthenes. Whether he exceeded him in eloquence, is another question. Cicero had the advantage of being posterior to Demosthenes, and of profiting by the reading of his works. He had two objects in view: to raise his fortune, and to obtain the palm of Roman eloquence. By uncommon diligence and good fortune he succeeded in both. Cicero studied philosophy at Athens, and continued that study even in the heat of his political pursuits and during the troubles of his country. His life was more active than that of Demosthenes, and he had to cope with more formidable adversaries. Cæsar, Crassus, Sallust, and Hortensius, were respectable competitors, but none of the antagonists of Demosthenes have been able to convey their names to posterity, except Æschines. The style of Cicero is flowing easy and ample, so that nothing could be added to his periods, without doubt he imitated Demosthenes, but his eloquence was of a different kind. He excelled in what was called the Asiatick manner, and was more diffuse and redundant in his expressions than Demosthenes. Some attribute this to the character of his auditors, who were a much ruder people than the Greeks, and needed amplification, repetition, and turning the subject into various lights before they could comprehend the nature of a question. Demosthenes's Orations probably would not have been so successful at Rome, and perhaps those of Cicero would not have been thought so pertinent at Athens. Cicero was equal to Demosthenes in the diligence of his preparations, and had more merit in this, as he was at the same time employed in most laborious offices and important causes. Demosthenes had only to prepare his speeches and watch the proper time to deliver them. He is said to have been fond of uniform periods and often introduced himself into his orations. His vanity can not be denied, but scarce any man of his time had so much reason to be vain, and he never laid claim to any merit which he did not unquestionably possess. His enemies had little to say against him but that he was a bad poet. In his publick conduct he was upright, popular and patriotick. His conduct in extinguishing the conspiracy of Catiline is praised even by Sallust his greatest enemy, and those who condemned it were such as were either indirectly involved in it, or nearly related to the conspirators. Cicero took part with Pompey against Cæsar, but was pardoned on the ruin of that party. He was obliged to flatter Cæsar while in power, but had not the same complaisance for Antony who succeeded him, which cost him his life. He seems to have foreseen and expected death as he plainly recommends to his countrymen to do to Antony what they had done to Cæsar, and if his countrymen had not been wanting to him, he might have been a second time the preserver of his country. One reason should move us to be indulgent to the character of Cicero, viz. because we know much more of him than of any other of the ancients, as not only his voluminous works on oratory and philosophy, but also three and thirty books of his private letters to his friends are still extant, in which we find his most secret thoughts, and which are the more to be relied on, that they were not designed by the authour for publication, but collected without his knowledge by the diligence of Tiro Tullius, his freedman.—Besides fifty-six orations, and the epistles abovementioned, he published four books on oratory inscribed to Herennius, four on Rhetorical invention, two of which only remain, two books De Oratori, one entitled Brutus, or De Clavis Oratoribus, one entitled Oratour, one on Topicks to Trebatius, a Dialogue on Oratorial Partitions, four books of Academical Questions, inscribed to Varro, five books de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum, inscribed to Brutus, five books of Tusculan questions, inscribed to the same Brutus, three books de Natura Deorum, two books on Divination, three books on Laws, three books de Officii, addressed to his son, a Dialogue on old age, a Dialogue on Friendship, an Exposition of the Paradoxes of the Stoicks, and a discourse on Consolation. Most of these are entire. We have, besides, the fragments of twenty other

orations, and sixteen philosophical treatises, which have not come down to our times. In his philosophical works, Cicero imitated Plato, and may be said to have excelled him in the perspicuity of his language and acuteness of his judgment. At least the Philosophical works of Cicero have been much more read, and are more instructive than those of Plato. Unhappily he adopted the principles of the new academy, who used to dispute indifferently on either side of every question. But the works of Cicero, considered as the history of Philosophy among the Romans, and as exertions of the human mind in search of truth, are truly estimable, and give us a high idea of his genius and penetration. The mind of Cicero must have been amazingly active, and the excellency and number of his compositions may convince us that no part of his time was spent in the service of vice and dissipation. Demosthenes was accused of incontinence and the love of money. He exacted no less than a talent, which is about one hundred and sixty pounds sterling from each of his pupils. But envy is silent, as to the morals of Cicero. He was unhappy in his domestick affairs. He lost his daughter in the flower of her age, and his son disgraced his family, notwithstanding the care bestowed on his education. He divorced his wife Terentia after she had lived with him for thirty years, and also his wife Publilia, whom he had married in his old age. He was proconsul of Bithynia, and managed the affairs of that province with exemplary integrity. He possessed the friendship of the most eminent men of his age. Cæsar dreaded his talents, Pompey admired his virtues, and Brutus and Atticus were the depositories of his most secret thoughts. Cato esteemed him, though he sometimes differed from him in politicks. Cicero received no gratification for the many services he performed to private persons and societies, except the honours of the state, which brought him new cares, troubles and enemies. But in that debauched age, a person of Cicero's popularity might have raised a great fortune by inheritance, and perhaps the greatest part of his fortune, which was very considerable, came to him in this way. Many families were daily becoming extinct, marriage was much neglected, and it appears from Horace, that legacy-hunting was a common and gainful profession at Rome. Cicero had many country houses, and lived splendidly, though not luxuriously, according to the taste of that age. His enmity to such men as Verres, Clodius, and Antony, does no less honour to his character than the friendship of Pompey and Cato. He appears to have been always on the side of virtue, except in his defence of Marcus Cælius, when he seems to have relaxed a little from the ordinary severity of his character. Cicero was a man of wit, and often succeeded in turning his adversaries into ridicule, but his wit was always decent and consistent with the dignity of his character, and his ridicule was never introduced improperly. He possessed a great and worthy character, independent of his oratory and learning, and when these are added, or taken into the account, he may be reckoned the greatest man of the Roman republick. To attract notice, and ascend to eminence, in an age of learning and science, required talents, diligence and perseverance. To attain the highest honours of the state, which were courted by the greatest men of his times was a task of no small difficulty, and to retain so many friends of parties, in the most distracted and divided time of the commonwealth, proved him to be possessed of great ability, wisdom and moderation. The powerful enemies which he contracted, and successfully opposed, in defence of oppressed individuals, not only do honour to his abilities, but to his humanity. He used his eloquence in the support of justice and innocence, and not merely in making and retaining friends. His greatest enemies respected his character, and all his exertion, both in publick and private life, tended to the honour and emolument of his country. His weaknesses were those of human nature, but the praise of distinguished virtue he shared with few and yielded to none in the age in which he lived. His country could not have been happier than he wished and endeavoured to make it, and even his last unsuccessful attempts in his Philippicks, do him the greatest honour. Though he did not possess the military talents that were then necessary to save his country, endeavoured to excite their ancient spirit, and sacrificed his life in the cause of the publick. The works of Cicero exhibit the truest virtue and patriotism as well as the maxims of moral wisdom. In a popular government the study of this authour can never be too warmly recommended to youth. By attention to his maxims, adopting his spirit, and imitating his example, they may be eminently useful to their country as well as to themselves, and raise it to a degree of dignity, eminence and happiness, as the Roman republick even in its best times neither deserved nor enjoyed.

(To be continued.)

For The Port Folio.

ON IMPUDENCE.

Impudentia omnia vincit.

Few modern languages can boast of more melody of sound, strength of expression, or variety of phrase,

than the English; yet with all these advantages, it has one defect of no ordinary magnitude; I mean the loose, vague, and indeterminate ideas affixed to many of its terms. Though obscurity be a fault common to most languages, yet in none is it so prominent or conspicuous, as in our own. The word *Impudence*, for instance, the theme of our present discourse, has by no lexicographer, as far as I am acquainted with, ever been justly or accurately explained. Were I called upon to give a definition of the term, I would say, it was that peculiar habit of the mind, which prompts the possessour, free from the suggestions of pride, vanity, or selfishness, to display to the world his bodily and mental accomplishments, for *its* sole use, benefit, and improvement.

Having thus laid down our premises, the next step in our inquiries after truth, shall be, to illustrate a few of the many advantages, which result to society from an ardent, incessant, and unwearied attention to this splendid accomplishment. Impudence adds ease to the carriage of a person, grace to his deportment, expression to his countenance, and vigour to his understanding; it renders his manners smooth, urbane, and elegant: his conversation natural, unaffected, polite, and entertaining; and his wit, (should he be so fortunate as to possess any,) universally relished, admired, and applauded. The society of the impudent ever has been, and will continue to be courted, not only by the rich and accomplished, the gay and the witty, the poor and the needy, the vulgar and illiterate, but also by the whole circle of the literati, virtuosi, weletani, and cognoscenti.

To complain that my fair countrywomen or countrymen are too remiss in the cultivation of this necessary and highly important accomplishment, would be doing them a manifest and shameful piece of injustice. For the honour of my native country, I am happy to observe daily issuing from the bar, the pulpit, and the drawing-room, myriads of those who have devoted their whole lives to the service of this unblushing goddess. Among the circles of elegance and fashion, we, however, it is true, occasionally meet with a solitary instance of a young and beautiful female, who is so totally devoid of taste and refinement, as thoroughly to depise it. By being educated, perhaps, in a remote part of the country, she is taught to believe modesty and reserve to be no inconsiderable virtues. And so fully have these antiquated notions taken possession of her mind, that no lapse of time is ever able to efface them. On her entrance into high life, she feels an unconquerable aversion to enter into all the pursuits and amusements of her fashionable acquaintance. So preposterous are her ideas of delicacy, and so unreasonable her false shame, that no persuasion can ever induce her to expose to the eye of every gazing spectator, the elegance of her form, or the symmetry of her shape, by the thinness or transparency of her dress. From the want of this invaluable attainment, she passes through life without much admiration or eclat. The high-born blood, the swelling fop, and the honourable coxcomb are seldom found dangling in her train; and the poor girl is at last, perhaps, *O mirabile dictu!* so extremely weak and foolish as to bestow her hand and heart on one whose virtues and talents are his principal recommendations.

These absurd opinions, and ridiculous notions are however justly reprobated by the fashionable belle and high-bred lady. *They* ever feel the utmost repugnance to conceal the splendour of their native charms, by a useless superfluity of ornaments. So hardy, indeed, is the constitution of a veteran belle, that I am actually persuaded she suffers less from the deprivation of dress than an inhabitant of Otaheite, or a native of Pelew. To render herself attractive and engaging her every wish and action is directed for this highly praise-

worthy end. She frequents all places of publick amusement where her charms can be displayed to most advantage. The theatre, the ball-room, and the card table, are her favourite and constant haunts, these are elements perfectly congenial to her nature, here she always has it in her power, by the help of a bold and confident air, by loud and incessant talking, by frequent ogling and repeated staring, to attract universal attention, admiration, and applause.

Impudence is of the utmost importance, not only in the private but also in the publick concerns of life. Behold that illustrious politician (who with about as many particles of sense, lodged beneath his pericranium, as there are grains of gold in a brass farthing, and with about as much political and scientifick knowledge as is usually acquired at one of our publick seminaries) boldly plunging in the vast and interminable gulf of politicks, bustling at elections, spouting at political meetings, flattering the vulgar, and cajoling the populace, in order to ascend to posts of profit, preeminence and power. Here every engine of his impudence is put in motion, no art is left untried, and no stone unturned to promote his political elevation. At length the wished-for object is accomplished, and now behold our political chieftain decked in the robes of office administering the affairs of government, with no other views, hopes, or expectations, than his own private interest and the aggrandisement of his family, friends and dependents. Should his conduct after a lapse of time become a subject of publick animadversion, (through the fickleness of his constituents, the intrigues of his enemies, or the aspersions of the slang-whangers,) he immediately enters into its defence and justification, and loudly proclaims to the world his own honour, integrity and patriotism: should he be accused of malversation, bribery, or corruption, in a bold and decisive tone he replies, that were he an Aristides, a Phocion, an Epaminondas, or a Cato, (which the better part of the world well knows he is) still he could not escape the censures of the envious, illiberal and malignant. Thus does our political pilot aided by the divine gift of impudence, stem, with the utmost facility, the rough and rugged tide of publick indignation, steer clear of the rocks and quicksands of popular inconstancy, and ride triumphant through the stormy waves of politicks, and lastly, reach in safety the blissful haven of immortal honour.

Impudence in youth has ever been considered as a promising sign. Observe with what anxiety and care a fond and partial mother watches over the tender years of her infant son! with what tremulous emotions of dedelight does she view in her offspring the seeds of a great and aspiring temper. When she beholds him playing some boyish tricks or mischievous pranks, she immediately augurs from these trifling circumstances, that her son is born to the fame, the fortunes and immortality of an Alexander, a Cæsar, or a Bonaparte: nor in the event is the doating mother disappointed in her sanguine expectations. Let us here for a moment stop and contemplate the glorious career of this youthful Hector. At an early age he is transferred from the nursery to some publick school or academy, (where discipline and severity being for the most part out of fashion) he is allowed to give a free and unlimited scope to all his youthful propensities being naturally fond of superiority, he seeks every opportunity to display it by threshing those that are younger or weaker than himself. Should they at any time chance to prefer a complaint to their tutor, he instantly repairs to him, mistates the case, perverts the facts, palliates his own fault and exaggerates that of his opponents and thus by his bold effrontery, and dauntless impudence, escapes without a flogging. After having here, by his heroick achievements, acquired the enviable character of a lad of spirit, he is next perhaps removed to some celebrated American Univers-

ty. A wide and extended field now opens itself to his view. Here his whole time and attention is employed, not indeed in the profound and indefatigable study of the classicks, but in contriving how he may best quiz the professours, or execute some deep laid plan of mischief. The college windows and the neighbouring buildings he repeatedly makes the subject of his attacks, and even the professours themselves, men venerable for their years, and respectable for their talents, to whom the modest look up at with an eye of awful respect and reverence, are not always secure from the impetuous assaults of this valiant and redoubted Achilles. During the three first years of his collegiate course, his principal operations are however confined within the walls of the college, but when this term is expired he begins to feel completely ashamed of his former inglorious feats, and henceforward seeks to enjoy a more honourable and extended fame. In order more fully to accomplish this desirable end, he is constant in his attendance at the ball-room, the theatre and the billiard table. In the first of these he is instructed in the polite and manly accomplishment of dancing, in the second, the arts of gallantry and intrigue, and in the third, the most fashionable and compendious method of increasing his fortune, improving his morals, and augmenting his fame. So enthusiastically attached is he to those ennobling pursuits, that he gives it as his firm and unalterable opinion, and who will pretend to dispute the truth of it, that they are of infinitely more importance to a man of the world, than all the philosophy of a Locke, the erudition of a Boerhaave or the science of a Newton. Being now master of at least as much classical and scientifick knowledge as when he first entered on his literary career, he anxiously waits for that happy period which is to free him from the trammels of college authority. Commencement at length arrives, the long-wished moment approaches, he mounts the rostrum and without fear, dismay or apprehension, boldly pronounces a sublime, pathetick and original composition with the energy of a Demosthenes, the grace of a Chatham and the elegance of a Burke. Having thus gloriously terminated his collegiate course, he next enters the great theatre of the world with all the accomplishments, both bodily and mental, necessary to constitute the finished gentleman, the polite scholar, the intrepid warriour, and the patriot statesman.

If such as we have enumerated, therefore, be the advantages which impudence is calculated to confer, who would not be sedulous and unremitting in its cultivation? Without it we behold the highest attainments are of no avail, the noblest genius is neglected, the brightest talents are overlooked, wit is redundant, and knowledge superfluous: but with it, there is scarcely anything in this sublunary world worth the acquisition that is not easily attainable—riches, esteem, admiration, applause, honour and immortality.

DE COURCY.

New-York, Feb. 12th, 1808.

For The Port Folio.

MR. OLDSCHOOL,

I presume it is a principle well established in Philosophy that the pleasure we derive from Poetry and Musick, like all our other *intellectual* pains and pleasures, may in a great measure be referred to that faculty of the mind, we call association. When contemplating the same beautiful object of Nature or of Art, the feelings of the clown differ from those of the philosopher, chiefly, because it excites in the refined observer a train of recollections productive of tender or sublime emotions, of which the clown can have no conception, as the ideas fitted to produce them never gained accession to his mind. Mr. Gay by deducing all the moral feelings from association gave the first hint to the

ingenious Dr. Hartley to trace most of the other phenomena of mind to the same primary faculty: but a charming poet presents us at once with a fine example of the power of association in poetry and a judicious illustration of its influence in producing the pleasure we receive from musical sounds.

"Why does the melting voice, the tuneful string,
A sigh of wo, a tear of pleasure bring?
Can *simple sounds* or joy, or grief inspire,
Or melt the soul responsive to the lyre?
Ah no! some other charm to rapture draws
More than the singer's skill, the artist's laws;
Some unknown feeling which the string awakes,
Starts to new life and through the fibres shakes.
Some cottage home, where first the strain was heard,
By many a tie of former days endear'd;
Some tender maid who on thy bosom hung
And breath'd the notes, all tearful as she sung;
Some youth who first awoke the pensive lay,
Friend of thy infant years, now distant far away;
Some scene, which patriot blood embalms in song;
Some stream which glides thy native vales among."

It is obvious that a man who could revisit the scenes of his infancy without experiencing any grateful emotions, who had never felt the influence of the tender passion, or who could meet an early and long-lost friend with frigid indifference, could derive no pleasure from the above passage beyond the effect produced on the auditory nerve by the mechanical jingle of the rhyme. "How feeble," says professour Stewart, "are the emotions produced by the liveliest conception of modern Italy, to what the poet felt when amid the ruins of Rome."

He drew th' inspiring breath of ancient arts,
——And trod the Sacred walks
Where, at each step, imagination burns."

It follows that poetry may be made in a superiour degree subservient to morality, by awakening only those tribes of ideas which are associated with ethical beauty and the nobler affections of our nature. We are told, indeed, that the *peculiar* province of Poetry is *to please*, as it is of Philosophy to instruct, and of Eloquence to persuade, but this is only saying that the first, whether it assume to instruct, or persuade, or merely to trifle should always communicate pleasure, or in other words that *to please* is the essence of poetry; for who will contend that the aphorisms of Epictetus would lose any of their sterling value if dropped from the lips of Cicero or clothed in the language of Milton? But to pursue this subject farther would trespass on your patience, I mean only to observe that the design of the authour in the following ode, was to recal the sensualist to the contemplation of Nature by awakening those ideas associated with rural beauty at a time when she delights in exhibiting to the eye of her admirer

"The gayest, happiest attitudes of things."

LESBIA.

For The Port Folio.

TO HIS FRIENDS,

On the return of Spring.

O dulces Comitum valete Coetus.

CATULLUS.

'Tis true I love with mirth elate,
The sparkling glass to circulate,
And laugh my cares away:

But comrades of the feast attend,
Forbear the nights in mirth to spend,
When pleasure rules the day.

For now the Spring revives the year,
And equinoctial tempests drear,
With March forsake the plain;

The forest breathes a rich perfume,
The flowers put on their vernal bloom,
The landscape smiles again.

The herds no more delight in stalls
But graze the mead; and April calls
The ploughman to the field;

The swallow leaves her watery bed,
Where long she lay, by instinct led,
From wintry snows conceal'd.

Now jocund youth delights to rove,
Each breeze inspires new life and love
While musick wakes around;

And village lads and maids are seen
To dance by moonlight on the green,
With rustick garlands crown'd.

Their vows now whisp'ring lovers plight,
Whilst evening shades, and friendly night,
The virgin blush conceals;

At first abash'd the maiden shrinks,
Then on his raptur'd bosom sinks,
And all her love reveals.

Haste to my close and clus'tring bowers,
And cull a wreath of choicest flowers,
To grace my Chloe's hair.

But no—the useless task decline,
Art cannot make her more divine,
The loveliest of the fair.

'Tis now the veteran seeks new scars,
And poets mount amid the stars,
On fancy's wing sublime.

The vernal hours, the ides of May,
The fleeting years glide fast away
Ah! seize the present time.

Then comrades of the feast attend,
Forbear the nights in mirth to spend,
When snows do not detain.

When Winter's clouds obscure the day,
We'll laugh and drink his storms away,
Till Spring returns again.

INDIANUS.

P. S. This trifle would be more appropriately presented at the return of the season which it attempts to celebrate. I must therefore plead as my apology for offering it at this time, that before the genial goddess again makes her appearance I must hasten to meet her on the plains of Indiana.

L.

VARIETY.

In the rough blast heaves the billow,
In the light air waves the willow;
Every thing of moving kind
VARIES with the veering wind:
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

Sombre tale, and satire witty,
Sprightly glee, and doleful ditty,
Measur'd sighs, and roundelay,
Welcome all! but do not stay.
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

The Prometheus of Eschylus combines tenderness with elevation and grandeur. The unconquerable spirit of the son of Japetus exhibits a species of the sublime very different from that fortitude which results from firmness of nerves or inflexible obstinacy of mind. He whom Misfortune cannot subdue, and whom Torture cannot move, he who professes to resist the tyranny of a vindictive god, and braves every effort of his power, the vulture that tears, and the lightning that blasts, displays a character so far superiour to that which common life presents either in the philosopher or the hero, that we regard him with the veneration due to unexampled magnanimity.

EPIGRAM.

I *love*, because it comes to me by *kind*,
And *much*, because it much delights my *mind*;
And *thee*, because thou art within my *heart*;
And thee *alone*, because of thy *desert*.
I love, and much, and thee, and thee alone;
By kind, mind, heart, desert, and every one.

IRREGULAR ODE.

From the authour to his mistress, after refusal.

BY JOHN EDMUND HARWOOD.

I turn'd so pale, when first the news I heard,
Pale as I could, my love, *with my complexion!*
Sunk were mine eyes, and blue my grisly beard,
And bent my beetle brows in sad reflection.
My carcase on the hard, hard ground I threw;
A while the lamb-like patience of my soul
Was lost amid the angry tempest's howl:
Even you, my fair, whom I have lov'd so true,
I call'd a little imp of evil,
More false more treach'rous than the devil!
I dare say now you thought that I should die!
'Tis pity maid so fair should be mistaken;
Alas! I fear you will but gain a sigh,
A tear or two, some angry looks and curses;
And if the muse be kind, some spiteful verses:
But death! no, no; my pride will save my bacon.

Not but I might, perchance, in sullen mood,
This goodly throat with hempen cord adorning,
Dangling from some tall poplar in the wood
Dance to the breeze on a November morning:
'Twould be so love-like, to seek my death,
On th' anniversary of that same hour,
When, in the pride of Beauty's future pow'r,
My infant mistress first inhal'd her breath:
I might, perchance, seek *Lethe* in the stream
Dive to that bliss which I had lost above;
Become, of village nurse, the midnight theme,
Or form the ballad of '*Rejected Love!*'
Now whether I'm seditious, or in fear,
I want the heart to quit the scene of trouble;
Hope gives a hint there still is something near,
And like a child I wish to grasp the bubble:
She whispers, too, I may have better luck yet,
So, if you please, I will not kick the bucket.
I know you wish the village boys to hoot—
'Look! look! there goes the poor desponding poet!
'There goes the dangler on a petticoat!'
All this you wish, you cruel jade—you know it:
But I shall balk you, mistress, on my life:
For though tempestuous scorn now clouds me over,
Some future sun may shine, some fairer wife
May tender consolation to your lover.
Meantime, while sweet *Thalia* is my muse,
I'll make to this same death a stout resistance;
Brushing at early dawn the healthful dews,
To keep his scarecrow worship at a distance.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

We have, for some time, been exceedingly solicitous to collect and arrange materials for something like a complete picture of Philadelphia. Many of its features have been already sketched, and we have had no occasion to complain of the execution, except when our own pencil has been employed. To this magnificent metropole we owe so much both of admiration and gratitude, that we delight at all times to do it the greatest honour. We shall commence, very shortly, the publication of a statistical account of that very elegant and useful structure, the great bridge over the romantick Schuylkill. This interesting memoir, with which we have been officially favoured, contains a complete description of the rise, progress, and successful termination of an undertaking honourable to the genius, enterprize, and publick spirit of the projectors, and of incalculable advantage to the city and country.

An amiable clergyman and a very polite and correct scholar, has promised us for publication in this paper, a complete course of Lectures on Rhetorick and the Belles Lettres. We have had an opportunity to peruse the manuscript, and we have acquired the right to affirm that the diligent perusal of this elegant as well as didactick work, will imbue the youthful mind with a deeper tint of polite literature than has been yet accomplished either by BLAIR or BARRON.

From the first establishment of this Journal, we have taken the most unwearied pains, and spared no practicable expense, to excite not merely a taste for elegant letters in general, but for CLASSICAL LEARNING in particular. We have encountered many obstacles, we have experienced many discouragements, and have stood up against the shock of opposition. After wandering, as it were, in a wood darkling and solitary, we begin to see through a visto, a troop of aspiring cavaliers, pressing forward in the right path to the temple of Wisdom. The study of the ancient authours is unquestionably becoming more and more fashionable in America, and memoirs of the great men of antiquity are sought for with peculiar avidity. We are delighted to find that the very elegant lives of illustrious Greeks and Romans, so vividly sketched in the classical lectures which we are now publishing from the manuscripts of that accomplished scholar, the late Dr. CHARLES NISBET, are talked of with the greatest commendation in the learned circles,

and that every man of delicate taste and sound judgment is disposed heartily to encourage the editor in this department of his labours. The editor is cheered by this sort of favour, and, animated by the countenance of the discerning few, he will persevere to inculcate, in every possible form, the glory as well as utility of being perfectly familiar with those exquisite productions which have reflected splendour upon more than one Augustan age.

One of our old and highly esteemed correspondents, now on his travels through some of the fairest portions of Europe, is, we understand, employed in writing his tour, and we are promised the privilege of publication.

SEDLEY's Imitation of Milton's Allegro is beyond all compare the most ingenious, correct, and harmonious of his poetical compositions. We shall insert it with great pleasure. We have often read Blackstone's Farewell to his Muse with delight, but we are not sure that our youthful American, engaged in a similar train of thought, has fallen below the standard of his illustrious predecessour. We think that in this species of versification he is most likely to excel. *See p. 178*

For the poetical version of certain odes of Hafiz we are indebted to a young man of genius who lately obliged us by a very spirited translation from one of the most interesting essays in the works of Sir William Jones. We hope our new correspondent will be induced to task his powers often.

Much curiosity is excited respecting the authour of the interesting travels which adorn our front pages. As we have had no injunction for secrecy, and as we are solicitous that the *South* should not be unjustly charged with indifference to polite literature, we apprize the publick that the tour in question is the production of a man of talents, rank, and fortune, at Charleston, South Carolina.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

For The Port Folio.

TO ELIZA.

The Sun descends to Ocean stream,
And finds his pillow in the west,
The veil of Night has dimmed his beam,
While ceaseless sighs possess my breast.

The rising Sun shall blushes wear,
And bright shall shine the morning plain,
Then in soft accents may I hear,
That Love did never sigh in vain.

SEDLEY.

For The Port Folio.

ODE *from Hafiz.*

Shiraz, to thee I pour the votive song,
And greet thy towers; lovely city hail!
Hail all the beauties, which to thee belong;
May Heaven protect thy walls, when storms assail.
Sweet stream of Rocnabad, whose waters clear,
The envied life of Khedher can bestow,
May every source of thine to Heaven be dear,
And with unsullied pureness ever flow.

In Giaferabad's sweet walks I stray,
Where balmy zephyrs ever breathe perfume;
Or in the rosy bowers of Mosellay,
Whose charms to rank with those may well presume.

Haste ye, who pleasure seek! to Shiraz fly!
Implore the damsels of that lovely place
To hear the vows of love; they'll not deny,
In each ye'll surely find an angel's face.

Of Egypt's luscious sugar ye may boast,
Who ne'er have known what maids in Shiraz dwell;
But there its sweetness would be quickly lost—
For Shiraz' damsels every sweet excel.

Soft zephyr, com'st thou from my lovely maid?
And can my ardent vows her bosom move?
Yet ah! why dissipate from sleep the shade?
For I was happy when I dreamt of love.

But should my fair one doubt my constant heart,

Sweet Zephyr, tell her that its streams I'll pour,
And with my life's blood will as freely part,
As when her parent gave the milky store.
Ah since thou dreadest thus the parting hour,
The last adieu, the separating kiss:
Hafiz, cease not to thank thy Guardian Power,
When with her presence, thou art crown'd with bliss.

S.

For The Port Folio.

If Mr. Oldschool thinks the following trifle unworthy of a corner in The Port Folio, the authour requests him to light his çigarr with it, as he is particularly anxious it should, by some means or other, communicate a *flame*.

Thou little sorceress, adieu!
I'll never, never, more believe thee,
And yet these eyes proclaimed thee true,
Whose lightning flashed, but to deceive me.

So does the snake's bewitching glance
Ensnare the warbler's fluttering wing,
And lures it e'en from heav'n's expanse,
To die—by Fascination's sting.

LUBIN.

TO AGENTS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

Our *punctual* Patrons and Agents are thanked for their attention to our pecuniary claims; and those of our friends and customers, who, from any cause except misfortune, are tardy to fulfil, or careless to remember their engagements, are very respectfully reminded that more than two months of the current year has elapsed, and that in consequence of injurious procrastination of payment, the establishment of this paper, and hence the character of the Journal, and the spirits and zeal of the Editor are materially affected. The *real* friends to him, his cause, and his objects, it is presumed, will not be offended by the statement of Truth and Candour, who never wantonly outrage the feelings of any individual. But the regular routine of business requiring payment at the expiration of every sixty days for all the materials and labour employed in the office of The Port Folio, and as, without any exaggeration, the expense of the establishment is much heavier than its friends generally imagine, it is obvious, without *a rigid punctuality on the part of Patrons*, the finances of the concern must be always embarrassed, and the Editor a malecontent, with Industry interrupted, with Zeal baffled, and with Enterprize overthrown.

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